

P R O T E S T A T I O N

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Upon all which Premisses and Protestation foresaid (which is the same with the former made by us at *Glasgow*, the 29. of November last, but so far differing as was necessary for answer to the new additions contained in this Proclamation; and clearing us of the aspersions wherewith we are charged therein, which we might lawfully do, having protested for this liberty in respect of our surprisall) Ane certaine number of all qualities and ranks for themselves, and in name foresaid, asked instruments. This was done in presence of a great confluence of people upon the mercate crosse of *Edinburgh* the 18. day of December. 1 6 3 8.

F I N I S.

Perlegi hunc tractatum cui titulus est (A Protestation, &c.) in quo nihil reperio sanae doctrinae, aut bonis moribus contrarium quo minus summa cum utilitate imprimatur intra mensem ab Iacobo Brysono.

Edinburgi 8.

ARCHIE. JHONSTON.

Ian. 1639.

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Reasons against the rendering of Our sworne and subscribed Con- fession of Faith.

I. By Archibald Johnston of Warriston.

IF wee should render Our subscribed Covenant, wee can not bee free of the great guiltinēsse of Perjurie before God: for as We were drawn by necessitie to enter into a mutuall Union and Conjunction amongst Our selves. So are Wee bound not only by the Laws of God and nature, but by Our solemn Oath and Subscription, against all dangerous or divisive motions, by all lawfull meanes to promote and observe the same without violation, and not suffer our selves by whatsoever suggestion, allurements, or terror, directly or indirectly to be divided, or drawn from it: And it is too manifest, that no motion can be more divisive upon the one side, nor can we upon the other part more directly give way to division, then willingly, and with our own consent to render the band of our union and conjunction to be destroyed, that no testimony thereof may be any more extant.

2. Wee would distinguish (except wee will decave our selves) between *Res Jurata*, that which is sworn, and *Juratio* our swearing thereof: for although all the generall and particular points contained in our subscribed Covenant were to be insert in another Covenant, to be made by the expresse commandement of authority; yet to render our sworne Confession, were both to passe from our swearing thereof, *as si res esset integra*, as if we had never sworne and subscribed, and also to destroy that which we have beene doing, as a thing unlawfull, and to be repented of. It were not only to make our oath to be no oath, our subscription no subscription, and our testimony no testimony, but really to acknowledge and Confesse our selves in this to have beene transgressours; so that we can neither claime any right to the promise of God, nor think our selves obliged in any duety to God by vertue of that oath. It must ever be remembered that oaths and perjuries are multiplied, not only according to the diversity of the things that are sworne, but according

to the swearing of the same thing at diverse times; so oft as we sweare and subscribe the same thing, by so many oathes and obligations are we bound unto God, and consequently the rendering of our subscription, is the renouncing of that individuall band and obligation, although possibly by another we may stand bound or sworne.

3. Our voluntary renewing of our Covenant with God, carrieth greater evidence of a free service to God: then if it had beene done by expresse commandement of authority: Because the power of God making his people so willing, and the readinesse and sincerity of the people is so much the more manifest, like as the LORD from heaven hath testified his acceptance by the wonderfull workings of his Spirit in the hearts both of pastors and people, to their great comfort and strengthening in every duty, above any measure that ever hath beene heard of in this Land; And therefore to give any token of recalling the same were unthankfully to misregard the work of God, and to quite all the comforts and corroborations that the people of God have to their great joy experienced at this time.

4. We have declared before God and the world, that this our Covenant, as it now standeth sworn and subscribed, is lawfull and necessary, that it is done in obedience to the commandement of God, conforme to the practice of the godly, and according to the laudable example of our religious progenitors, who by the like oath have obliged us to the substance and tenor of this: And therefore if we should now by rendering our Covenant undo that which we have done, we should deny the commandement of God, condemne the examples in scripture, and the practises in this kirk, and precondemne all like commendable courses to be taken by posterity in the like exigence.

5. No Covenant in things civile can be altered or rescinded without consent of the parties with whom it is made; But Our Covenant is a religious Covenant made with God and amongst Our selves, and therefore can not be rendered without the expresse consent of the meanest of all the subscribers; who justly for their comfort may crave of Us all the benefit and performance thereof.

6. There

6. There is no appearance that such as affect the prelates and their courses, will be moved to sweare and subscribe all the parts of this Covenant: As for instance, To labour by all meanes to recover the former puritie and libertie of the Gospel, as it was established and professed, before the novations already introduced, or to declare that they undoubtedly do believe, that the innovations and evils contained in Our Supplications, Complaints, and Protestations are abjured in the Confession of Faith, as other heads of Poperie expressly contained therein.

7. Although all the points of the subscribed Covenant were ratified by act of Parliament, yet could we not render the subscribed Covenants: Because acts of Parliament are changeable, and of the nature of a civile ratification: And it is necessarie, that this Our Oath being a religious and perpetuall obligation, should stand in vigour for the more firme establishing of religion in Our owne time, and in the generations following.

8. All the world may justly wonder at Our inconstancie, and Our enemies who in their insolencie are readie to insult upon Us at the least occasion, would not cease to mock at Us, and traduce Us as perjured Covenant-breakers, and troublers of the peace of the kirk and kingdome, without any necessary cause.

9. Although we do not compare the Scriptures of God with a written confession of faith, yet as the rendering of the Bible was the sin of *Traditores* of old, and a signe of the denyall of the truth contained therein: so the rendering of Our Confession of faith, so solemnly sworne and subscribed, for staying the course of defection, and for barring of Poperie, and all other corruptions of religion, could be interpreted to be no lesse, then a reall denyall of Our Faith before men, in a time when God calleth for the Confession thereof.

10. Many fair promises have beene made, for not urging of articles already concluded, and for not troubling us with any further novations, which being beleived, have ensnared many, and drawne them on to doe that which otherwise they would not have done, all which promises have beene broken and denied, when the performance was craved. And why shall We not expect the like in this case, especially where the challenge will be found to be more hard and difficile?

Objections.

Objections answered.

Ob. 1. **I**T may be objected that the Confession of Faith being confirmed by the Kings Authoritie were much to be preferred to this, which seemeth to have no expresse commandement of authoritie.

Ans. 1. Our Covenant wanteth not the warrant civile and ecclesiasticall, which authorised the former Covenant: 2. Although rash and unadvised oathes be unlawfull, yet voluntary covenanting with God is more free service to God (as hath beene said before) then that which is commanded by Authoritie. 3. We ought not to do ill that good may come of it, and must resolve to choose affliction rather then iniquitie.

Ob. 2. The rendering of the whole copies of the subscribed Covenant were a ready meane to remove all feares of the Kings wrath against the subscribers.

Ans. 1. It is more fearefull to fall in the band of the living GOD. 2. They wrong the King who threaten his good subjects with his wrath, for covenanting with God, in defence of religion and of his Majesties Person and Authoritie. 3. It were more righteous with GOD to turn his Majesties Heart and hand against vs, for dealing thus deceitfully in his Covenant.

Ob. 3. If this be not granted, his Majestie will grant neither Assemblie nor Parliament for establishing Religion, and settling the peace of the kirk and kingdome.

Ans. 1. The good providence of God so sensible in this whole work from the beginning, will incline the heart of so just and gracious a King, to deale more kindly and benignely with his good Subjects. 2. We have law, reason, and custome for craving and expecting of those lawfull remedies of the grievances and feares of the whole kirk and countrey.

Ob. 4. The end of the making of our Covenant was, that we might be delivered from the innovations of religion, which being obtained, our Covenant should cease, as having no further use.

Ans. 1. As acts of Parliament against poperie did not abolish our former Confession of faith, wherein poperie was abjured, So Acts of Parliament to be made against these innovations can not make our Covenant to be unprofitable. 2. Although the innovations of religion were the occasion of making this Covenant, yet our intencion was against those, and against all other innovations and corruptions to establish religion by an everlasting Covenant never to be forgotten.

